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Black Bear Hunting Digest — 2026



Conservation Department Offices

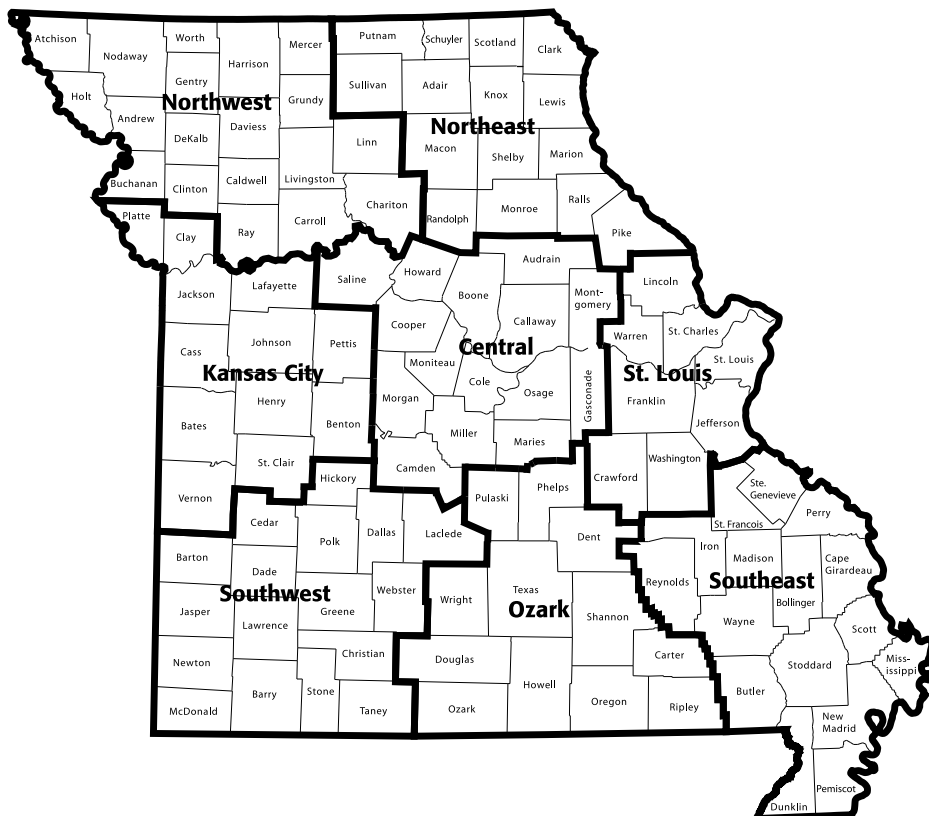


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Central Region

3500 East Gans Road
 Columbia, MO 65201
 573-815-7900

Kansas City Region

12405 SE Ranson Road
 Lee's Summit, MO 64082
 816-622-0900

Northeast Region

3500 S. Baltimore
 Kirksville, MO 63501
 660-785-2420

Northwest Region

701 James McCarthy Drive
 St. Joseph, MO 64507
 816-271-3100

Ozark Region

551 Joe Jones Blvd.
 West Plains, MO 65775
 417-256-7161

Southeast Region

2302 County Park Drive
 Cape Girardeau, MO 63701
 573-290-5730

Southwest Region

2630 N. Mayfair
 Springfield, MO 65803
 417-895-6880

St. Louis Region

2360 Highway D
 St. Charles, MO 63304
 636-441-4554



To report poaching or game-law violations, call

Operation Game Thief

800-392-1111

**Rewards are available for information
 leading to the arrest of game-law violators.
 You can remain anonymous.**

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What's New in 2026?

- Additional permits have been allocated for each Black Bear Management Zone (BMZ). See Page 10.
- Harvest quotas have increased for each BMZ. See Page 10.

Note: According to Rule 3 CSR 10-5.216 of the *Wildlife Code of Missouri*, if you have been convicted of multiple or major violations of the *Code* in the past five years, the Conservation Commission may consider suspending or revoking your hunting, trapping, and/or fishing privileges regardless of any previous court action. The point system the Commission uses to assess *Code* violations is explained at short.mdc.mo.gov/ZkV.

Bear Hunting in Missouri

BEAR HUNTING IN MISSOURI



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Black bears are becoming more common and widespread across the southern half of Missouri. The Conservation Department has determined that the state's bear population can sustain a limited and highly regulated harvest. This provides opportunity for Missourians

to participate in the sustainable harvest of a valuable natural resource, while also allowing the bear population to continue to grow. Eventually, as bear numbers increase, hunting will serve as an essential component of bear population management.

Season at a Glance

Dates

Oct. 17–30, 2026, or until the harvest quota is reached in each Black Bear Management Zone (BMZ).

Location

Black bear hunting is allowed south of the Missouri River in three Black Bear Management Zones (BMZs). You may hunt only in the BMZ specified on your permit. A map and written descriptions of the BMZs are found on Page 10.

Shooting Hours

One-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset

Attention

Black bear permits are allocated through a random drawing. See Page 6.

Limits

One black bear of either sex with the following restrictions:

- You must call 800-668-4045 prior to hunting each day to determine if the harvest quota has been met. This line will be updated by midnight on each day of the bear season.

- Harvest numbers will be assessed daily after 10 p.m. Should a harvest quota be reached, the season will close for that BMZ on the following day.
- The director of the Conservation Department may close hunting early in a BMZ if harvest reaches 80 percent of the quota.
- If the harvest quota is met or the director closes the season for the BMZ in which you are hunting, you may not harvest a black bear.
- Black bears that have taken refuge in a den may not be harvested or harassed.
- Only lone black bears may be harvested. You may not harvest a bear that is with one or more other bears, including female bears with cubs.
- Black bears with collars and/or ear tags may be harvested.
Note: Any bear with ear tags labeled “DO NOT CONSUME, MO DEPT CONS” should be processed in the field like other harvested game, but you should contact MDC before eating any part of the animal.

Allowed

- Centerfire rifles or handguns using expanding-type bullets such as lead or copper
- Shotguns with slugs only
- Air-powered guns, .40 caliber or larger, charged only from an external high-compression power source (external hand pump, air tank, or air compressor)
- Muzzleloading or cap-and-ball firearms, .40 caliber or larger and capable of firing only a single projectile at one discharge. In-lines and scopes are allowed.
- Multiple-barreled muzzleloading or cap-and-ball firearms and/or muzzleloading or cap-and-ball handguns, including revolvers, .40 caliber or larger, are allowed and may be carried in addition to a muzzleloading or cap-and-ball rifle.
- Air bows
- Longbows, compound bows, and recurve bows. Hand-held string-releasing devices, illuminated sights, scopes, and quickpoint sights are allowed.
- Crossbows

Required Permit

Resident Black Bear Hunting Permit

To harvest one black bear in the Black Bear Management Zone specified on the permit (see Page 10). Bear hunting permits are available to Missouri residents only and are distributed by random drawing (see Page 6). If selected, you may purchase your bear hunting permit beginning July 1. You must have completed an approved hunter-education course, or qualify for an exemption (see Page 6), to purchase a bear hunting permit. Age 11 and older \$25

Prohibited

- Self-loading firearms with capacity of more than 11 cartridges in magazine and chamber combined. Some exceptions apply. See 3 CSR 10-7.900 of the *Wildlife Code of Missouri*.
- Ammunition propelling more than one projectile at a single discharge (such as buckshot)
- Full hard metal case projectiles
- Fully automatic firearms
- Atlatls
- Dogs (see Page 8)
- Bait (see Page 8)
- Electronic calls and electronically activated calls
- Artificial lights, night vision equipment, thermal imagery equipment, or telemetry equipment
- Hunting bears while they are in a stream or other body of water
- Hunting from a boat with a motor attached
- Hunting with the aid of a motor-driven land conveyance or aircraft (see Page 8)
- Additional methods may be prohibited by local ordinances.

Permits

Anyone who hunts, takes, or attempts to take a black bear must have a Resident Black Bear Hunting Permit. You must sign, carry, and show, upon request, your permit to any officer who enforces the *Wildlife Code of Missouri*.

Resident Black Bear Hunting Permit

To pursue, take, possess, and transport one black bear during the black bear hunting season. You may hunt only in the Black Bear Management Zone specified on your permit.

Age 11 and older \$25

Permit Requirements

To purchase a Resident Black Bear Hunting Permit you must:

- Be a resident of Missouri.
- Be at least 11 years old.
- Have an approved hunter-education card or qualify for an exemption (see below).
- Be selected through the random drawing to participate in black bear season (see below).

Hunter-Education Requirement

You must complete an approved hunter-education course before you can purchase a black bear hunting permit unless:

- You were born before Jan. 1, 1967.
- You have a developmental disability. See Rule 3 CSR 10-5.205 of the *Wildlife Code of Missouri*.

If you can prove you completed a hunter-education course in another state, you are not required to take Missouri's course. You must be 11 years or older to enroll in Missouri's hunter-education course. For more information, visit mdc.mo.gov/huntereducation.

Random Drawing for Bear Hunting Permits

Black bear hunting permits are allocated through a random drawing. You must be a Missouri resident to apply.

- The application period is May 1–31. Results are available beginning July 1.
- It costs \$10 to apply. This fee is nonrefundable.
- You must apply for a specific Black Bear Management Zone.
- You may submit only one application per year. Only one hunter is allowed per application.
- You cannot transfer (give) your permit to another hunter. Please do not apply if you won't be able to hunt.
- To apply, visit mdc.mo.gov/buypermits.

Permit Allocations and Harvest Quotas

Each year, the Conservation Department establishes how many Resident Black Bear Hunting Permits will be allocated for each Black Bear Management Zone (BMZ). The Department also sets a harvest quota for each BMZ.

During the hunting season, harvest numbers will be assessed daily after 10 p.m. Should a harvest quota be reached, the season will close for that BMZ on the following day. The director of the Conservation Department may close hunting early within a BMZ if harvest reaches 80 percent of the quota.

You are required to call 800-668-4045 prior to hunting each day to determine if the harvest quota has been met. This line will be updated no later than midnight on each day of the black bear hunting season. If the harvest quota is met or the director closes the season for the BMZ in which you are hunting, you may not harvest a black bear.

Zone 1

- Permits allocated: 1,000
- Harvest quota: 30 black bears

Zone 2

- Permits allocated: 750
- Harvest quota: 22 black bears

Zone 3

- Permits allocated: 250
- Harvest quota: 8 black bears

Purchasing Permits

If you have been selected to participate in the black bear hunting season, you may purchase your permit beginning July 1 using any of the methods below.

- Over the counter from any permit vendor. No surcharges will be assessed.
- Online anytime at mdc.mo.gov/buypermits. Use your credit card to pay. No surcharges will be assessed. Print your permit and have it in hand immediately or use the free MO Hunting app (see Page 7). Your permit will appear on the app immediately after purchase.
- By telephone at 800-392-4115. Use your credit card and pay a \$1 surcharge. Allow 10 days for delivery.

Replacing a Lost Permit

If you lose your permit, simply download the MO Hunting app to your Android or Apple mobile device, log in with your date of birth and Conservation Number, and a valid, electronic version of your permit will appear on the app. Any active, valid permit can be reprinted from home at mdc.mo.gov/buypermits. Replacement permits can also be purchased from any vendor for \$3.

MO Hunting App

The Conservation Department's free MO Hunting app offers a quick, easy, and convenient option for carrying your permits afield. The app, which is available for Android and Apple mobile devices, allows you to:

- See all the hunting, fishing, and trapping permits you have purchased — even if they were purchased from a traditional vendor or by telephone.
- Carry valid, electronic permits afield.
- Electronically “notch” (void) your bear, deer, elk, and turkey permits directly from the app.
- Telecheck your bear, deer, elk, or turkey using an easy-to-fill form. Telecheck will upload a confirmation number to the app. **Note:** Wildlife labeling requirements still apply. See Page 14.

To log in to MO Hunting, you'll need your date of birth and Conservation Number. This nine-digit number can be found on your Heritage Card, Conservation Permit Card, or on any current or previous permit. For help locating your Conservation Number, call 573-522-0107 during regular business hours or go to **short.mdc.mo.gov/ZkH**.

MO Hunting is available in the Google Play and Apple App stores. You can also get MO Hunting and learn more about the app at **short.mdc.mo.gov/Zi2**.

Note: Make sure you update MO Hunting before each hunting season. This will ensure you are using the most recent version of the app and that all of your permits are visible while hunting.

Social Security Number Requirement

Federal Statute 42 U.S.C. § 666 and Missouri Revised Statute 454.403 require buyers of Missouri hunting, fishing, and trapping permits to provide their Social Security number. This requirement also applies to landowner permits. Individuals who do not have a Social Security number will be required to affirm that information. Falsifying a Social Security number may result in revocation of privileges or criminal charges. Social Security numbers are securely stored and used in support of the Missouri Department of Social Service's child support enforcement.

Permit Allocation for Resident Landowners

At least 10 percent of the available bear hunting permits will be awarded to Missouri resident landowners who have qualifying property in the specific Black Bear Management Zone (BMZ) for which they are applying. Landowners will follow the same procedure to enter the random drawing as general applicants (see Page 6), and if awarded a black bear hunting permit, may hunt anywhere within the specified BMZ. If there are fewer landowner applicants than the number of permits allocated to them, the permits not issued to landowners will be awarded to general applicants.

Qualifying for Resident Landowner Status for the Bear Permit Drawing

A Missouri resident is a person who does not claim any resident privileges (for example, hunting, fishing, trapping, driver's license, or registered voter) in another state or country and whose legal residence or domicile has been in the state of Missouri for at least 30 days prior to obtaining a landowner permit.

In addition to being a Missouri resident, you also must meet one of the following criteria:

- You must own at least 20 acres in one contiguous tract within the Black Bear Management Zone (BMZ) for which you are applying.
- You must be a member of the landowner's immediate household and have the same legal residence as the landowner for at least the last 30 days.
- You must be a general partner of a resident or foreign limited liability partnership, limited partnership, or limited liability limited partnership, or a general partner of a general partnership formed by written agreement and the partnership must own at least 20 acres in one contiguous tract within the BMZ for which you are applying.
- You must be an officer of a resident or foreign corporation and the corporation must own at least 20 acres in one contiguous tract within the BMZ for which you are applying.
- You must be a managing member of a resident or foreign limited liability company and the company must own at least 20 acres in one contiguous tract within the BMZ for which you are applying.
- You must be an officer of a benevolent association organized pursuant to Chapter 352 of the *Revised Statutes of Missouri* and the association must own at least 20 acres in one contiguous tract within the BMZ for which you are applying.
- You must be a settlor of a revocable trust that holds at least 20 acres in one contiguous tract within the BMZ for which you are applying.
- You must be a permissible distributee of an irrevocable trust that holds at least 20 acres in one contiguous tract within the BMZ for which you are applying.

Submit Your Property Information

To qualify for landowner status, you must submit information about your property by filling out a Landowner Permit Application at **mdc.mo.gov/buypermits**. Your Landowner Permit Application must be approved before you apply to the drawing for black bear hunting permits.

General Information

Hunter-Orange Requirement

While hunting black bears, you and your companions must wear a cap or hat and a shirt, vest, or coat of the color commonly known as hunter orange, which must be plainly visible from all sides. Camouflage orange garments do not meet this requirement.

Assisting Other Hunters

- A permit is not required to accompany a hunter as long as the accompanying individual does not assist in any manner in the taking of bears.
- Adults who accompany youth hunters ages 11–15 do not need a permit. The adult must be 18 or older and be hunter-education certified or born before January 1, 1967.
- Adults who accompany hunters with disabilities do not need a permit. The adult must be 18 or older and be hunter-education certified or born before January 1, 1967. The hunter with disabilities must be hunter-education certified and carry a certified statement of eligibility from a licensed physician, ophthalmologist, or optometrist.
- At all other times, a filled or unfilled Resident Black Bear Hunting Permit is required to assist others in taking bears.

Dogs

You may not use dogs or bring them with you while hunting black bears. However, leashed dogs under direct control of a handler may be used to track and recover wounded bears. Handlers and other people assisting with tracking do not need hunting permits, provided they are not the person who wounded the bear. They may not have in their possession a firearm, bow, or crossbow, except for concealable firearms as defined in Chapter 571, RSMo. Concealable firearms possessed under this exception may not be used to take wildlife.



Drones

Unmanned aerial vehicles, commonly known as drones, may not be used or possessed while hunting. A drone may, however, be used after a bear has been shot to locate and recover a wounded animal. For rules regarding the use of drones to recover wounded game, see 3 CSR 10-7.410 in the *Wildlife Code of Missouri*.

Bait

Using bait to hunt black bears is illegal. Bait is defined as any type of food that is placed or scattered in an attempt to attract bears to the area. Bait includes — but is not limited to — grain, livestock feed, bird food, pet food, food produced for human consumption, and concentrated food powder. Scents and minerals, including salt, are not bait; mineral blocks with food additives are bait. **Note:** Salt products and minerals are prohibited year-round in many counties. For additional information, see the *Fall Deer & Turkey Hunting Regulations and Information* booklet, which is available in July at MDC offices, permit vendors, and online.

An area is considered baited for 10 days following complete removal of bait. You are in violation of baiting if you take or attempt to take a black bear with the aid of bait, when you know or reasonably should know that the area is or has been baited. It is illegal to place bait in a way that causes other hunters to be in violation of the baiting rule.

Retrieval of Game

If you kill or injure a bear, you must make a reasonable effort to retrieve and include the animal in your season limit. However, this does not authorize trespass.

Wanton Waste

It is illegal to intentionally leave or abandon any portion of any wildlife that is commonly used as human food.

Properly Cook All Game

Trichinellosis is a disease people can get from eating undercooked meat that is infected with microscopic parasites. Most people associate trichinellosis with eating undercooked pork, but in recent years, more cases have been attributed to eating undercooked wild game, such as bear.

Early symptoms of trichinellosis include diarrhea, abdominal cramps, nausea, and vomiting. These may be followed by fever, muscle pains, facial swelling, and fatigue. Symptoms can last from weeks to months, and can vary in severity.

Properly cooking meat will prevent trichinellosis. Wild game should be cooked to an internal temperature of 160 degrees. A meat thermometer should be used because color is not a good indicator of doneness. Smoking, freezing, or curing game meat does not kill all *Trichinella* parasites.

Keep Carcasses Out of Streams and Lakes

It is illegal to place a bear carcass or any of its parts into any well, spring, brook, branch, creek, stream, pond, or lake.

Hunting Near Floodwaters or Fire

Wildlife, except waterfowl, may not be pursued or taken while trapped or surrounded by floodwaters or while fleeing from floodwaters or fire. **Note:** Flood-prone areas in southeast Missouri are closed to hunting, except for waterfowl, during the fall deer and turkey seasons when river levels exceed certain limits on local river gauges. To see if an area is open or closed for bear hunting, visit mdc.mo.gov/semofloods.

Black Bear Hunting on Conservation Areas

Black bear hunting is allowed on many conservation areas. To find a list of conservation areas open for black bear hunting, visit mdc.mo.gov/bearhunting.

Tree Stands on Conservation Areas

Portable tree stands may be placed only between Sept. 1 and Jan. 31 on conservation areas. Unattended stands must be plainly labeled with your full name and address, or Conservation Number. You may not use nails, screw-in steps, or any material that would damage the tree. Tree stands must be removed before Feb. 1.

Portable Blinds on Conservation Areas

Portable blinds are permitted on conservation areas, but they must be removed from the area daily and may not be left unattended between the hours of 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. It is recommended that blinds be labeled with the contact information of the owner and hunter-orange be displayed on the exterior of the blind to aid other hunters in locating and avoiding the blind.

Giving Away Game

You may give your harvested bear (excluding the gallbladder) to another person, but the bear counts toward your season limit. Bears that are given away must be labeled with the taker's full name, address, date taken, and Telecheck confirmation number.

Possession, Storage, and Sale

Properly checked bears may be possessed by anyone if labeled with the taker's full name, address, date taken, and Telecheck confirmation number. The Telecheck confirmation number must remain attached to the carcass until a meat processor begins working on the animal.

Bears left at commercial processing or cold storage plants must be claimed by May 1 following the season taken.

Legally taken wildlife and wildlife parts, after mounting or tanning, may be bought and sold. A bill of sale is required and must include the seller's full name, address, and the number and species of these parts, and the full name and address of the buyer. The bill of sale shall be retained by the buyer while these parts are in their possession.

Black Bear Gallbladders

Regardless of the state where the bear was harvested, black bear gallbladders may not be bought, sold, offered for sale, transferred, or given away. Extracted black bear gallbladders may not be transported into or within Missouri.

Sunrise/Sunset Times

Black bear hunting is allowed from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset. The sunrise and sunset times listed below are for Jefferson City and points on the same longitude north or south. For locations east, subtract one minute from the time listed for each 13.5 miles (airline) of distance. For locations west, add one minute for each 13.5 miles.

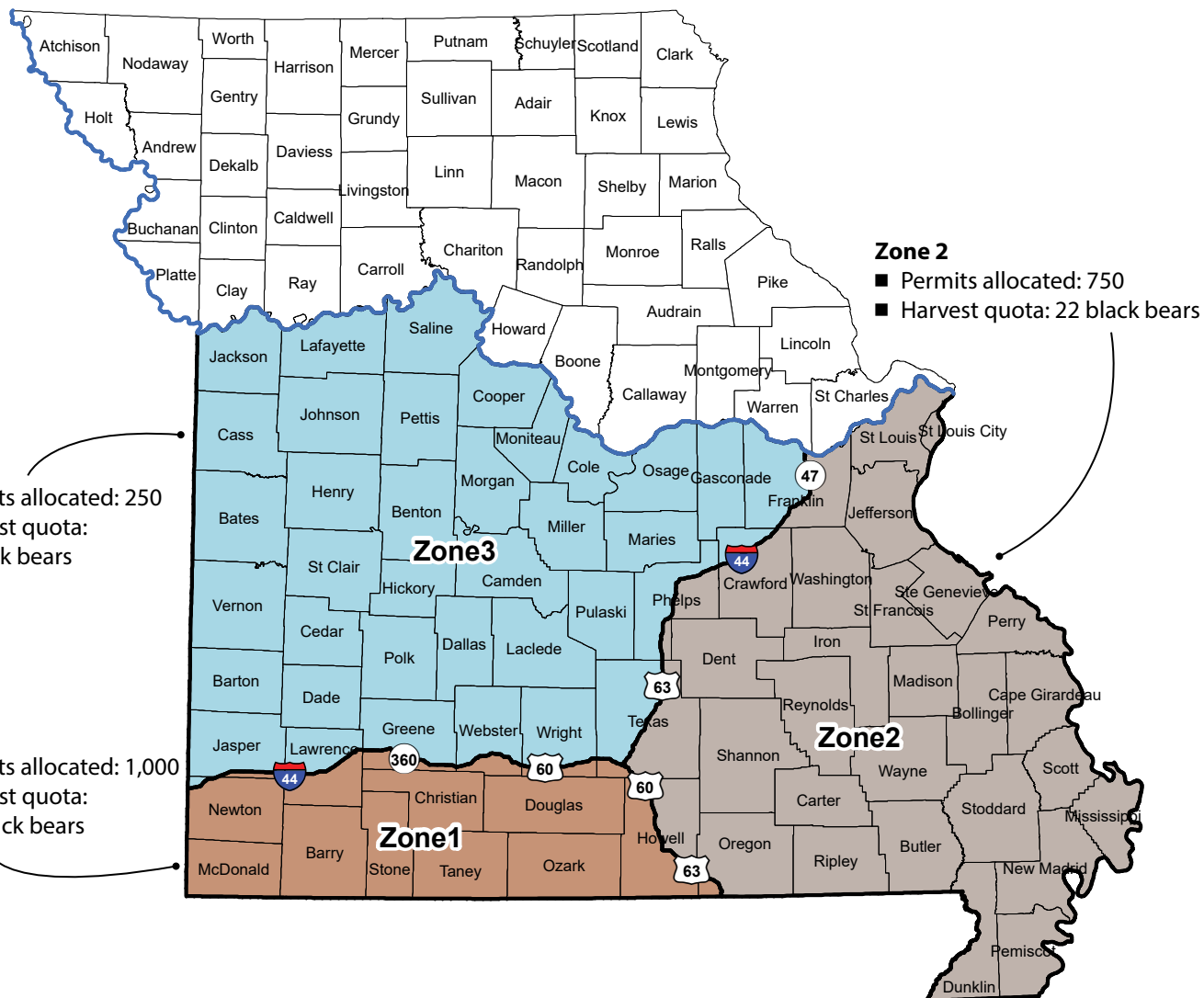
DAY	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.
Oct. 17	7:20	6:28
Oct. 18	7:21	6:26
Oct. 19	7:22	6:25
Oct. 20	7:23	6:23
Oct. 21	7:24	6:22
Oct. 22	7:25	6:21
Oct. 23	7:26	6:19
Oct. 24	7:27	6:18
Oct. 25	7:28	6:17
Oct. 26	7:29	6:16
Oct. 27	7:30	6:14
Oct. 28	7:31	6:13
Oct. 29	7:32	6:12
Oct. 30	7:33	6:11

Black Bear Management Zones

You must hunt in the Black Bear Management Zone (BMZ) that is specified on your permit. There is a quota (limit) for how many bears may be harvested in each BMZ. Harvest numbers will be assessed daily after 10 p.m. Should a harvest quota be reached, the season will close for that BMZ on the following day. The director of the Conservation Department may close hunting early within a BMZ if harvest reaches 80 percent of the quota.

You are required to call 800-668-4045 prior to hunting each day to determine if the harvest quota has been met.

This line will be updated no later than midnight on each day of the black bear hunting season. If the harvest quota is met or the director closes the season for the BMZ in which you are hunting, you may not harvest a black bear.



Zone 1

The portion of Missouri west of a line running north from the Arkansas border on U.S. Highway 63 to U.S. Highway 60; west on U.S. Highway 60 to MO-360; west on MO-360 to Interstate 44; west on Interstate 44 to the Oklahoma border

Zone 2

The portion of Missouri east of a line running north from the Arkansas border on U.S. Highway 63 to Interstate 44; east on Interstate 44 to State Highway 47; north on State Highway 47 to the Missouri River; east along the Missouri River to the Illinois border

Zone 3

The portion of Missouri south of a line running east from the Kansas border along the Missouri River to State Highway 47; south on State Highway 47 to Interstate 44; west on Interstate 44 to U.S. Highway 63; south on U.S. Highway 63 to U.S. Highway 60; west on U.S. Highway 60 to MO-360; west on MO-360 to Interstate 44; west on Interstate 44 to the Oklahoma border



3 CSR 10-7.900 Black Bear Hunting Season: General Provisions

(1) Black bears may be pursued, taken, possessed, or transported only as permitted in this Code.

(2) Persons hunting or pursuing black bears must possess a prescribed black bear hunting permit.

(3) The black bear hunting season will begin the Saturday preceding the third Monday in October and will run for fourteen (14) consecutive days or until the Black Bear Management Zone-specific harvest quota is reached. If the zone-specific harvest quota is reached prior to the close of the black bear hunting season, that zone will be closed to hunting the following day. If the harvest is equivalent to or exceeds eighty percent (80%) of the Black Bear Management Zone-specific harvest quota, the director may close hunting within that Black Bear Management Zone on the following day.

(4) Black bears may be pursued or taken only from one-half (1/2) hour before sunrise until one-half (1/2) hour after sunset.

(5) Black bear hunting permits are valid only for the Black Bear Management Zone specified on the permit. Black Bear Management Zone boundaries are as follows:

(A) Black Bear Management Zone One shall be that portion of Missouri west of a line running north from the Arkansas border on U.S. Highway 63 to U.S. Highway 60; west on U.S. Highway 60 to MO-360; west on MO-360 to Interstate 44; west on Interstate 44 to the Oklahoma border;

(B) Black Bear Management Zone Two shall be that portion of Missouri east of a line running north from the Arkansas border on U.S. Highway 63 to Interstate 44; east on Interstate 44 to State Highway 47; north on State Highway 47 to the Missouri River; east along the Missouri River to the Illinois border; and

(C) Black Bear Management Zone Three shall be that portion of Missouri south of a line running east from the Kansas border along

the Missouri River to State Highway 47; south on State Highway 47 to Interstate 44; west on Interstate 44 to U.S. Highway 63; south on U.S. Highway 63 to U.S. Highway 60; west on U.S. Highway 60 to MO-360; west on MO-360 to Interstate 44; west on Interstate 44 to the Oklahoma border.

(6) Black Bear Management Zone-specific harvest quotas are established annually by the Conservation Commission. Harvest quotas for the 2026 black bear season will be set as follows:

(A) Bear Management Zone One: thirty (30) black bears.

(B) Bear Management Zone Two: twenty-two (22) black bears.

(C) Bear Management Zone Three: eight (8) black bears.

(7) Black Bear Hunting Methods.

(A) Archery: longbows, recurve bows, compound bows, and crossbows. Atlatls may not be used to take black bear.

(B) Muzzleloader: muzzleloading firearms as defined in 3 CSR 10-20.805, .40 caliber or larger.

(C) Any legal method: archery as described in 3 CSR 10-7.900(7)(A) and muzzleloader methods; shotguns; handguns or rifles firing expanding-type centerfire ammunition; and air-powered guns, .40 caliber or larger, charged only from an external high compression power source (external hand pump, air tank, or air compressor).

(D) Prohibited, in use or possession:

1. Methods restricted by local ordinance;

2. Self-loading firearms with capacity of more than eleven (11) cartridges in magazine and chamber combined with the exception of concealable firearms, as defined in Chapter 571, RSMo. Firearms possessed under this exception may not be used to take wildlife while black bear hunting;

3. Ammunition propelling more than one (1) projectile at a single discharge, such as buckshot;

4. Full hard metal case projectiles;

5. Fully automatic firearms; and

6. Electronic calls or electronically activated calls.

(8) Black bear may not be hunted, pursued, taken, or killed —

(A) While in a stream or other body of water;

(B) From a boat with a motor attached;

(C) With the aid of a motor-driven land conveyance or aircraft, except unmanned motor-driven air conveyances may be used to recover wounded black bear as specifically authorized by 3 CSR 10-7.410;

(D) With the aid of dogs, in use or possession, except for the recovery of wounded black bear as specifically authorized by 3 CSR 10-7.410;

(E) With the aid of artificial light or night vision equipment;

(F) With the aid of telemetry equipment, in use or possession; and

(G) With the aid of bait. Bait is considered any type of food lure (including, but not limited to: grain, feed, bird food, pet food, food produced or manufactured for consumption by humans or domestic animals, or concentrated food powder which may be consumed or attempted to be consumed by black bears) which is placed or scattered so as to constitute an enticement to black bears. Scents and minerals, including salt, are not regarded as bait; however, mineral blocks with food additives are prohibited. An area is considered baited for ten (10) days following complete removal of bait. A person shall be in violation of this provision if they take or attempt to take black bears by the aid of bait, where the person knows or reasonably should know the area is or has been baited. It is illegal to place bait in a way that causes others to be in violation of the baiting rule.

(9) Black bears that have taken refuge in a den may not be disturbed, pushed, harassed, or taken in any manner by any

person acting either singly or as one (1) of a group of persons.

(10) Only lone black bears may be taken. No person shall take a black bear they know or reasonably should have known is in the presence of one (1) or more other bears, including female black bears with cubs.

(11) During the black bear hunting season, all persons hunting black bears and their companions must wear a cap or hat and a shirt, vest, or coat of the color commonly known as hunter orange, which must be plainly visible from all sides. Camouflage orange garments do not meet this requirement.

(12) Hunters who kill or injure a black bear must make a reasonable effort to retrieve and tag it, but this does not authorize trespass.

(13) Hunters who take a black bear shall void their permit immediately by notching the month and date of harvest and shall keep the black bear separate or distinctly identifiable from black bears taken or possessed by another person. When the black bear is not personally attended and prior to reporting through the Telecheck Harvest Reporting System, the voided permit or proper label shall be attached to the black bear. Black bears may be possessed and transported only by the taker until reported through the Telecheck Harvest Reporting System. Any black bear taken shall be accurately reported by the taker or in the taker's immediate presence through the Telecheck Harvest Reporting System by 10:00 p.m. on the day taken. The Telecheck confirmation number shall be recorded immediately on the black bear hunting permit. Black bears shall remain intact, as a field-dressed carcass, or be quartered with evidence of sex retained, until the black bear is reported through the Telecheck Harvest Reporting System. All black bears shall be reported through the Telecheck Harvest Reporting System prior to processing (except field dressing or quartering as specified in this section) or being removed from the state. After reporting through the Telecheck Harvest

Reporting System, black bears may be possessed, transported, and stored by anyone when labeled with the permit or any label that includes the full name and address of the taker, date taken, and Telecheck confirmation number.

(14) Regardless of the state of harvest, extracted black bear gallbladders may not be transported into or within Missouri. Black bear gallbladders may not be bought, sold, offered for sale, transferred, or given away.

(15) Black bears (or parts thereof excluding the gall bladder) reported in accordance with established procedures, when labeled with the full name and address of the taker, the date taken, and the Telecheck confirmation number of the black bear, may be possessed, transported, and stored by anyone.

(16) Hunters who take a black bear shall submit either an upper or lower premolar from the harvested bear to the department within ten (10) days of harvest. The tooth required by this section shall be mailed, shipped, or delivered in-person to: Furbearer Program, Missouri Department of Conservation, 3500 East Gans Road, Columbia, MO 65201. Regardless of the method of submission, the tooth must be placed in an envelope and labeled with the full name and address of the taker, the date taken, and the Telecheck confirmation number of the black bear. If sent via the U.S. Postal Service or other common carrier, the envelope containing the tooth must be placed inside a separate mailing envelope. All submissions postmarked within ten (10) days of harvest, shall be deemed to have complied with the provisions of this section.

3 CSR 10-7.905 Black Bear Hunting Season: Application and Draw Process

(1) Missouri residents, as defined in 3 CSR 10-5.220, may apply for black bear hunting permits.

(A) Bear Management Zone-specific permit quotas for black bear hunting permits are established annually by the Conservation Commission. At

least ten (10) percent of the Resident Black Bear Hunting Permit Black Bear Management Zone-specific permit quota will be awarded annually to approved resident landowners, as defined in 3 CSR 10-20.805, whose qualifying property is in the specific Black Bear Management Zone for which they are applying. If the number of qualifying landowner applicants is less than the percentage of the permits allocated for landowners, that portion of the quota not issued to a qualifying landowner will be reallocated to other applicants. Permit quotas for the 2026 black bear season will be set as follows:

1. Bear Management Zone One: one thousand (1,000) Resident Black Bear Hunting Permits.
2. Bear Management Zone Two: seven hundred and fifty (750) Resident Black Bear Hunting Permits.
3. Bear Management Zone Three: two hundred and fifty (250) Resident Black Bear Hunting Permits.

(B) To be eligible for the Resident Black Bear Hunting Permit(s) awarded to approved resident landowners, an application must have been submitted to and have been approved by the department as described in 3 CSR 10-7.412 prior to applying for a Resident Black Bear Hunting Permit.

(C) Permit Draw.

1. The application period will be from May 1–31 annually and results will be available by July 1 annually.
2. Application fee for Resident Black Bear Hunting Permit: ten dollars (\$10).
3. Only one (1) application is allowed per year.
4. Only one (1) person is allowed per application.
5. Permits are nontransferable.

After the Harvest

After harvesting a black bear, you must notch your permit, Telecheck your bear, and mail a premolar to the Conservation Department. Here's how.

Notch Your Permit

Immediately after harvesting a bear, you must notch your permit.

- To notch a paper permit, tear a small notch in the month and day of harvest on the permit.
- To notch a permit using the MO Hunting app, simply select the permit you wish to use from the list in the app, and follow the short, easy prompts on the screen.

Once you notch your permit, you may transport your bear within Missouri. The bear must remain intact, field-dressed, or quartered with evidence of sex retained (males: penis, testicles, or penis sheath; females: vulva or vagina) until it has been Telechecked. **Note:** Notching is not the same as Telechecking. You must still Telecheck your bear by 10 p.m. on the day of harvest.

As long as you stay with your bear, you don't need to attach a tag to it. But if you leave the bear unattended, you must attach a tag.

- If you have a paper permit, you can simply attach your notched permit to the bear. We recommend sealing the permit in a zip-top bag and attaching the bag with string, wire, or tape.
- If you're using the MO Hunting app, you must attach a label with your full name, address, permit number, and date of harvest to the bear.

Telecheck Your Bear

You must report your harvest to Telecheck by 10 p.m. on the day of harvest.

Telecheck Using the MO Hunting App

Step 1: Select your notched permit from the list.

Step 2: Tap "Telecheck."

Step 3: Follow the prompts on the screen. Telecheck will upload a confirmation number to your mobile device.

Telecheck Using a Phone or the Internet

Step 1: Collect the following information, which you will be asked when you use Telecheck:

- Your Telecheck ID Number (found on your permit)
- The sex of the bear
- County of harvest
- Was the bear harvested on public or private land?
- Weapon used to harvest the bear
- Weight range (estimated in pounds)
- Does the bear have a collar?
- If the bear has ear tags, the color and number for left and right ear tags
- **Note:** Any bear with ear tags labeled "DO NOT CONSUME, MO DEPT CONS" should be processed in the field like other harvested game, but you should contact the Conservation Department before eating any part of the animal.

Step 2: Grab a pen, then call the number listed on your bear hunting permit or visit **mdc.mo.gov** and follow the instructions. You can call between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m.

Step 3: After you have provided the required information, you will receive an eight-digit confirmation number that verifies you have legally checked your bear. Write this number on your permit.

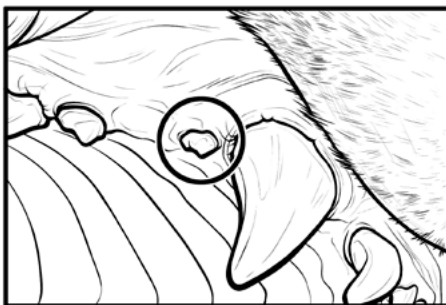
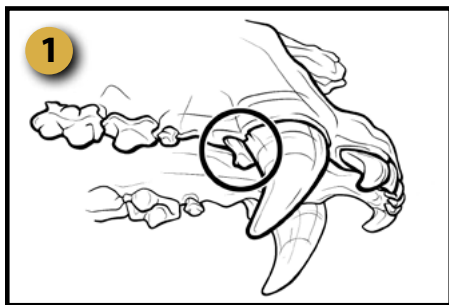


Points to Remember

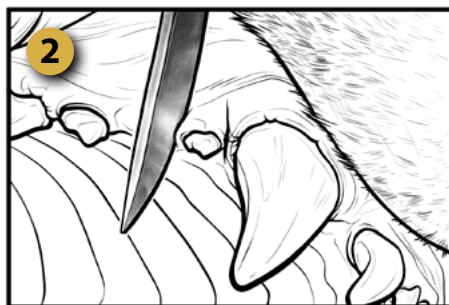
- Notching voids a permit. Do not notch your permit until you have harvested a bear.
- You must report your bear to Telecheck by 10 p.m. on the day it was harvested.
- Bears may be possessed and transported only by the taker until they are reported through Telecheck.
- Your bear must remain intact, as a field-dressed carcass, or be quartered with evidence of sex retained, until reported through Telecheck.
- Your bear may not be processed until it is reported through Telecheck.
- You must Telecheck your bear before it can be transported out of Missouri.

Mail a Premolar to MDC

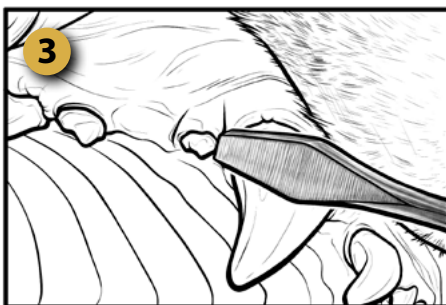
You must submit a premolar (tooth) from your harvested bear within 10 days of harvest.



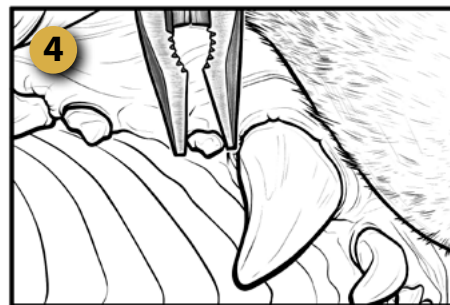
Find the small tooth that is located directly behind either of the upper or lower canines.



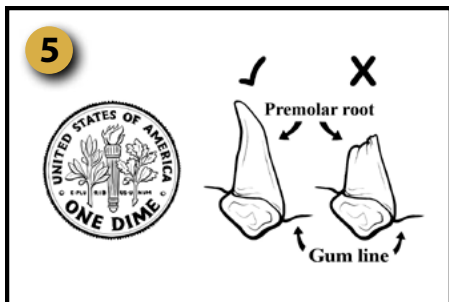
Use a knife to cut the gum on both sides of the premolar.



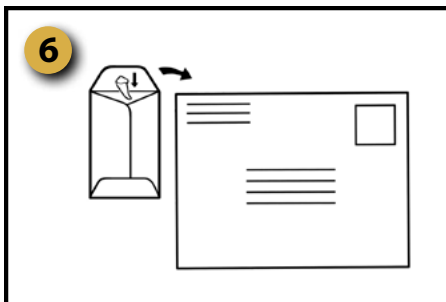
Insert a knife or a flat-head screwdriver into the gum between the premolar and canine and gently loosen the premolar from the gum tissue.



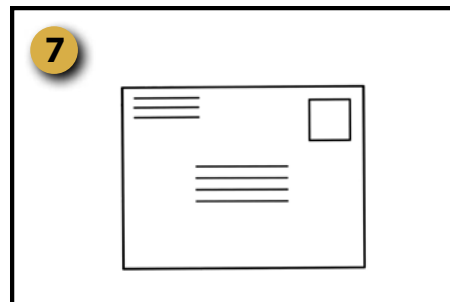
Once the premolar is loose, use pliers to remove the tooth. If it doesn't come out easily, loosen it further using a knife or screwdriver.



If the root of the tooth breaks, extract another premolar. Generally, bears have a premolar behind each canine tooth (four in total), however, as bears age, these premolars may fall out, or they may have been extracted as part of a research project. If your bear is missing all premolars, please contact your local conservation agent.



Remove excess flesh, wrap the tooth in tissue paper or foil, and place it in a sealed envelope labeled with your full name, address, the date of harvest, and the Telecheck confirmation number. If your tooth will be submitted through the mail or shipped, you must place the envelope that contains the wrapped tooth into a separate mailing envelope.



Sending a Tooth by Mail

Reminder: If you are mailing a tooth, it must be placed in a separate mailing envelope. To meet federal and state laws, the mailing envelope must be labeled with:

- Your name and address
- Telecheck ID
- The words: "Black bear, *Ursus americanus*, premolar tooth"

Address the envelope to:

MDC Furbearer Program
3500 East Gans Road
Columbia, MO 65201

- You may deliver the tooth in person or by mail.
- It may take up to one year for age results to be shared with hunters.
- For detailed instructions, visit mdc.mo.gov/bearhunting.